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ABSTRACT

This packet of information items presents a variety of resources for the effective transition of young children with disabilities from one program or service to another. Typical items include: challenges and truths of transition; six key points of transition; regulations from relevant federal laws; a flowchart of interagency transition planning; a transition planning self-assessment tool; guidelines for developing an interagency transition agreement; a sample interagency cooperative agreement; a form to assist transition planning; a form to indicate parties responsible for specific transition activities; planned conversations with parents about transition; a checklist for parent visits to classrooms; tips for parents preparing their child for a new program; the role of transition coordinators and potential transition team members; guidelines for supporting the child's transition within the sending program; guidelines for supporting the child's transition within the receiving program; a listing of skills which ease preschool entry; nonacademic skills important for transition to kindergarten; an individual transition planning form; elements of a good report; evaluation issues; a transition satisfaction scale for parents; and ideas on transition from around the country. (Contains 74 references.) (DB)

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IT'S A BIG STEP

Transition means goodbye and hello. It presents many challenges:

1. Help child and family loosen old ties and establish new ones
2. Help child and family learn effective skills for coping with future transitions
3. Meet legal requirements
4. Continue or add needed services
5. Provide developmentally appropriate services
6. Assure the least restrictive environment
7. Meet family needs to the maximum extent possible
8. Use resources wisely
9. Prevent and manage stress

From: Bridging Early Services Transition Project Brochure

TRANSITION TRUTHS

1. Transitions are inevitable!
2. Transitions involve change
3. Change can produce stress
4. Successful transitions require advanced planning
5. Successful transitions require ongoing communication between programs and with families
6. Success with early transitions may help later
7. All children do not automatically transfer all skills to all environments
8. A program can be a "sending" or "receiving" program, or both
9. Receiving program staff may need assistance from sending program staff
10. A written transition plan reduces confusion, eases stress, and facilitates a successful transition for everyone.
11. Transition preparation should begin during the child's final year at a program.

- See also Hains, A.H., Fowler, S.A. & Chandler. (1988). Planning school transitions: Family and professional collaboration. Journal for the Division of Early Childhood, 12(2), 108-115.

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A

1.

TRANSITIONS: SIX KEY POINTS

1. Good transitions require a great deal of ***PREPLANNING.***

2. Good transitions require a great deal of ***COMMUNICATION*** among
   a. Agencies
   b. Service provider at different levels
   c. Parents and teachers
   d. Allied professionals

3. Good transitions require ***SHARED INFORMATION*** and ***TRUST.***

4. Good transitions ***EMPOWER PARENTS*** to advocate responsibly for the needs of their children.

5. Good transitions seek the ***LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT*** and prepare children to function there.

6. Good transitions are ***EVALUATED*** in order to be improved opon.
   a. Parent opinion
   b. Staff opinion
   c. Child data
   d. Financial costs

- Rosenkoetter, S.E. (1988). Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource System.

THREE COMPONENTS OF SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION

1. **Inter-agency collaboration and written procedures.**
   a. Agencies
   b. Buildings
   c. Classroom
   d. Teachers
   e. Therapists

2. **Parent involvement at the level they wish.**

3. **Preparation of the environments to aid the child's transition.**
   a. Sending personnel
   b. Receiving personnel
   c. Parents, if they wish.

- See also Hains, A.H., Fowler, & Chandler. (1988). Planning school transitions: Family and professional collaboration. Journal of the Division for Early Childhood, 12, 108-115.
- Fowler, S.A., Schwartz, I., & Atwater. (1991). Perspectives on the transition from preschool to kindergarten for children with disabilities and their families. Exceptional Children, 58, 136-145.

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Rules and Regulations from PL 99-457 Part H (Sec.303.344) on Transition

303.344 "Content of IFSP

(h) Transition at age three.

(1) The IFSP must include the steps to be taken to support the transition of the child, upon reaching age three, to--

(i) Preschool services under Part B of the Act. to the extent that those services are considered appropriate; or

(ii) Other services that may be available, if appropriate.

(2) The steps required in paragraph (h) (1) of this section include--

(i) Discussions with, and training of, parents regarding future placement and other matters related to the child's transition;

(ii) Procedures to prepare the child for changes in services delivery, including steps to help the child adjust to, and function in, a new setting; and

(iii) With parental consent, the transmission of information about the child to the local educational agency, to ensure continuity of services, including evaluation and assessment information required in 303.322, and copies of IFSPs that have been developed and implemented in accordance with 303.340 and 303.346."

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendments of 1991 (Reauthorization; PL 102-119)

Congressman Ford (MI) from the Committee on Education and Labor submitted a summary of the main emphases of the reauthorization. It begins:

"The bill includes several changes to parts B and H of the Act designed to facilitate the development of a comprehensive "seamless" system of services for children aged birth to 5, inclusive, and their families which will ensure: (1) a smooth transition for children moving from early intervention programs under part H to preschool programs under part B and (2) the delivery of appropriate services."

Specific aspects:

STATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES NOW REQUIRED

(1) Definition of how the state will ensure smooth transition at age 3
(2) Description of how parents will be included in transition planning
(3) Description of how the 0-2 lead agency will notify the local education agency and convene a conference, with the approval of the family, at least 90 days before the child is eligible for the preschool program under part B in accordance with State law. The conference is to include representatives of the two agencies and the family and is intended to

(i) review the child's program options from the third birthday through the rest of school year
(ii) establish a plan for transition activities. [Part H, Section 678 (a)(8)]

LRE

(1) Early intervention services are to be provided "to the maximum extent appropriate in natural environments, including the home and community settings where children without disabilities participate." [Part H Section 672 (2) (G)]

(2) The IFSP is now to include "a statement of the natural environments in which early intervention services shall appropriately be provided." [Part H Section 677 (d) (5)]

MONEY

(1) States can use Part H funds to pay for children who turn 3 during school year. [Part H Section 679 (3)]

(2) States can use not more than 20% of preschool grant funds to pay for children who are 2 but will turn 3 during the school year, whether or not these children have received Part H services. [Part B Section 619 (c)(2)(B); (f)(2); Section 679 (3)] Part H then does not apply. [Part B Section 619 (g)]

but

(3) FAPE applies in both cases. [Part H Section 679 (3); Part B Section 619 (g)]

IFSP

(1) Can be used 3-5 inclusive if State, LEA, and parents agree. [Part B Section 614 (a) (5)]

(2) The statute now speaks of "family directed assessment of the resources, priorities, and concerns of the family" - not "strengths and needs." [Part H Section 677 (d)(2)]

(3) Case manager is to be referred to as "services coordinator." This individual may be "from individual profession most immediately relevant to the infant's or toddler's or family's needs or who is otherwise qualified to carry out all the applicable responsibilities. . .who will be responsible for the implementation of the plan and coordination with other agencies and persons." [Part H Section 679 (d)(7)]. This suggests that a parent may become qualified to perform all of the service functions carried out by a service coordinator and provide the service coordination service for another family if the parent obtains appropriate training by qualified persons.

(4) Must now include "a statement of the natural environments in which early intervention services shall appropriately be provided." [Part H Section 677 (d)(5)]

FAMILIES

(1) Families can accept or reject any early intervention services without jeopardizing other services. [Part H Section 677(e)]

(2) The assessment process must allow for family direction of assessment of family resources, priorities, and concerns as well as "the identification of the supports and services necessary to enhance the family's capacity to meet

the developmental needs of their infant or toddler with a disability. [Part H Section 677 (a)(2)]

(3) Families are to be included in transition planning. [Part H Section 678 (a)(8)]

(4) Families may serve as service coordinators for other families, if properly trained. [Part H Section 677 (d)(7)

STATE ICC

Now must "advise and assist the SEA regarding the transition of toddlers with disabilities to services provided under Part B." [Part H Section 682 (e)(B)]

COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

Each state's CSPD may include a plan for "training personnel to coordinate transition services for infants and toddlers with disabilities from an early intervention program . . . to a preschool program." [Part H Section 676 (b)(8)(D)]

Section 136 of the Head Start Transition Project Act

"Each Head Start agency . . .shall . . develop . . .family service coordinators (to) plan to ensure the smooth transition of children served under the Head Start Act, Part B of Chapter I. . .(Even Start). . ., IDEA Part B, and comparable early childhood development programs to elementary schools."

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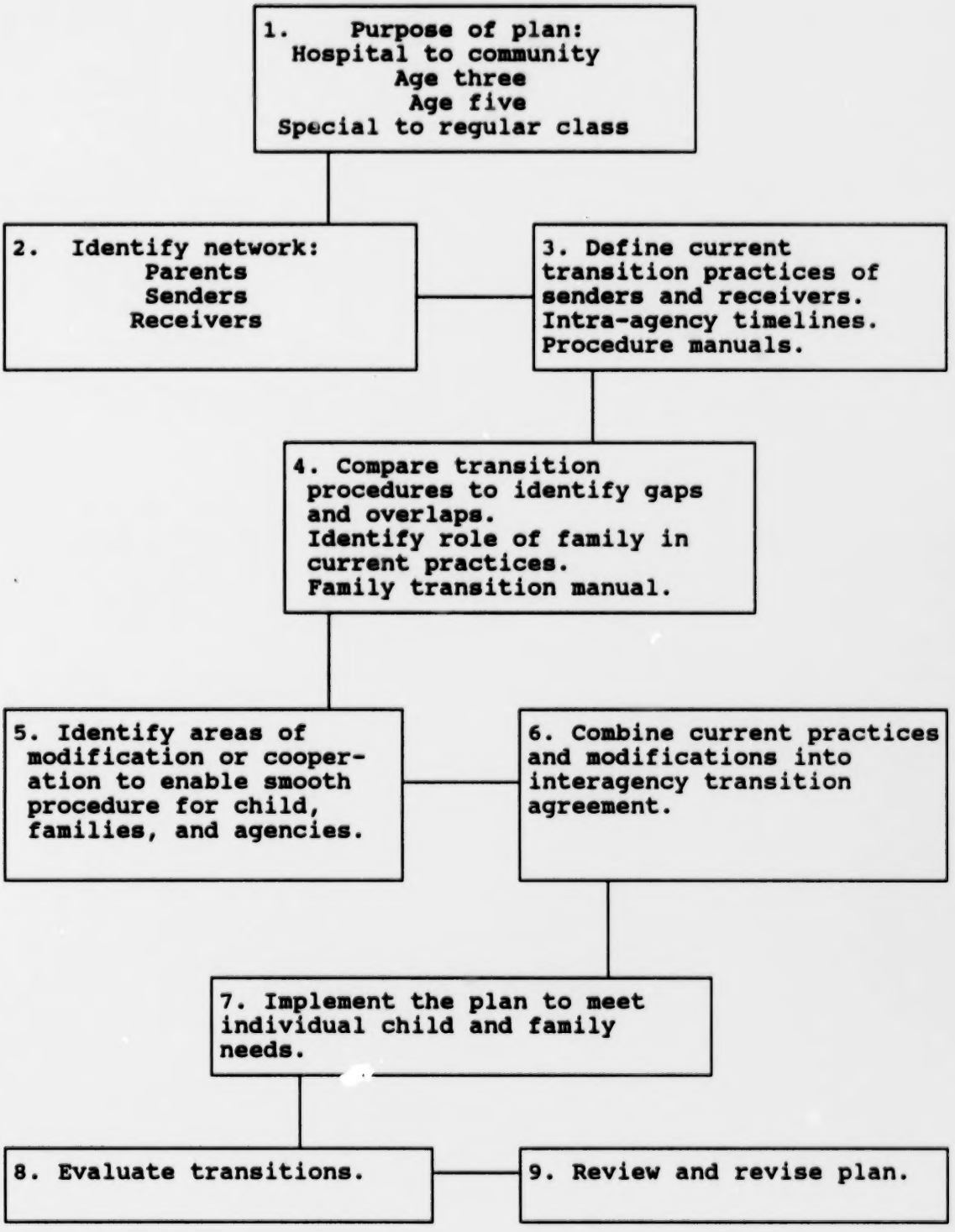
Interagency Transition Planning


1. Purpose of plan:
Hospital to community
Age three
Age five
Special to regular class
2. Identify network:
Parents
Senders
Receivers
3. Define current transition practices of senders and receivers.
Intra-agency timelines.
Procedure manuals.
4. Compare transition procedures to identify gaps and overlaps.
Identify role of family in current practices.
Family transition manual.
5. Identify areas of modification or cooperation to enable smooth procedure for child, families, and agencies.
6. Combine current practices and modifications into interagency transition agreement.
7. Implement the plan to meet individual child and family needs.
8. Evaluate transitions.
9. Review and revise plan.

6.

TRANSITION PLANNING SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

The purpose of this instrument is to enable program administrator and staff members to: 1) develop a clear picture of current transition policies, practices, and procedures, 2) assist in identifying components that will be the target of transition development/improvement efforts, and 3) provide a process for prioritizing development/improvement efforts.

INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: RATE YOURSELF ON HOW FREQUENTLY EACH PRACTICE CURRENTLY OCCURS.

Read each best practice indicator carefully and circle the letter on the corresponding scale that best reflects current program practices, procedures, and/or policies. A rating of N(no), indicates that this practice does not occur at the current time. A rating of S(somewhat) suggests partial attainment of the "best Practice". In other words this practice occurs sometimes and/or under some conditions. Finally, a rating of Y(yes) should be assigned to those practices that are fully implemented by your program and occur consistently. In determining a rating for each item, be sure to consider both your procedures for receiving children and families and those for sending them on to their next placement.

STEP 2: DECIDE IF THIS IS A PRACTICE TO BE TARGETED FOR DEVELOPMENT OR IMPROVEMENT.

Use the column labeled "Target for Change?" to indicate whether you would Y(yes) or would not N(no) like to make a change in the extent to which your program is currently engaging in this practice. Complete this column for each indicator.

STEP 3: PRIORITIZE THE PRACTICES THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO CHANGE.

After completing the "Occurs?" and "Target for Change?" columns for all the indicators, the "Priority" column should be completed. Begin by looking at those indicators that you have indicated a desire to target for change, then number these indicators to show which changes you feel are most important to make. Circle number "1" for the indicator you feel is the "highest priority", 2 for the next most important to change, and so forth. You may want to stop numbering after you have indicated your top 5 priorities or you may decide two indicators are of equal importance and you would like to address them simultaneously.

STEP 4: WRITE YOURSELF A NOTE.

The column labeled "Notes" may be filled in at any point in the process of completing the instrument. You may want to jot down specific examples of how you are currently addressing the best practice indicator, or ways in which you would like to see existing practices, policies, and/or procedures changed.

Adapted from: Best practice indicators for early childhood special education programs: A self-assessment tool for program development/improvement. University of Vermont.

TRANSITION PLANNING

INDICATORS	OCCURS? NO SOMEWHAT YES	TARGET FOR CHANGE?	PRIORITY FOR CHANGE LOW MEDIUM HIGH	NOTES
1. Leaders and/or staff of sending and receiving programs are acquainted with one another.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
2. Sending and receiving progams have a designated interagency group to work on transition planning	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
3. Sending and receiving programs have an action plan to improve transition in the future.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
4. Staff members use written transition procedures to plan activities both to receive new children and families and to send children on to their next placement	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
5. Sending and receiving programs have developed a timeline of transition activities which is adapted to meet individual child and family needs.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
6. Sending and Receiving programs have developed and periodically revise an interagency agreement on transition.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
7. Families receive assistance in obtaining the desired information, support, and opportunities for participation in planning their child's transition.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
8. Parents receive a information manual to help them be involved in the transition process.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
9. Sending and receiving programs have identified staff who will coordinate the transition or assist families in coordinating the transition process themselves.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
10. Sending and receiving programs have a system for exchanging information and are familiar with services of each. (examples: exchange visits; share curriculum materials)	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
11. The family and the sending teacher/services coordinator discuss the transition process, review the steps, and determine the family's desired level of involvement.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
12. Transition issues are considered, and appropriate outcomes/goals and objectives are included in the child's IFSP/IEP.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
13. Sending program notifies receiving program(s) well in advance about the number and birth dates of children who are likely to enter the receiving programs.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
14. Sending program prepares transition progress report, including information on child's experiences and accomplishments in their program.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
15. The sending program obtains written permission from the parents to share information about the child with the receiving program(s).	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	

16. The sending program, the receiving program, and the family meet at least 90 days prior to the child's third birthday to discuss the child's progress as summarized in the transition report, consider possible program options for the future, and differences in educational services, eligibility, and paperwork between the current program and potential receiving programs. They review the transition timeline, plan for the family's desired level of participation in the transition process, and plan any additional evaluations needed to determine eligibility and program placement.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
17. Parents and transition coordinator or sending teacher visit potential placements for the child and ask questions.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
18. The family and sending and receiving program staff participate in the placement conference. They make decisions regarding placement, identify starting date, special services, and begin planning new IFSP/IEP based on current IFSP/IEP and transition progress report.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
19. Sending program transfers records in a timely manner.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
20. Receiving program visits child in present placement to begin planning for the child's special needs, to identify similarities and differences between the two programs, and to plan strategies to ease the child's transition between them.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
21. Sending program and/or parents implement strategies to ease the child's transition into the receiving program.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
22. Child and family visit the new program.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
23. The family exchanges information with the receiving program on their child (his/her likes and dislikes, effective motivators and approaches to discipline, current medical information related to the child's special needs, etc.), their goals and dreams for their child's school experiences, and strategies for effective communication between school and home.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
24. Prior to the child's entry, the school obtains necessary resources, including personnel, instructional materials, and adaptive equipment and completes necessary building improvements.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
25. Receiving teacher implements strategies to ease the child's transition into the program.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
26. Family and sending and receiving programs communicate regarding appropriateness and satisfaction with the placement.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	
27. Interagency transiton group conducts evaluations of the transition process and considers changes to improve the process for the next year.	N S Y	N Y	1 2 3 4 5	

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DEVELOPING AN INTERAGENCY TRANSITION AGREEMENT

The Interagency Transition Agreement Can Help:

* Expand service options
* Integrate services
* The flow of information
* Define each program's responsibilities
* Cope with funding limitations
* Reduce the potential of duplication
* Improve client accessibility to services
* Encourage use of common assessments and terminology
* Demonstrate that administrators are interested and committed

A. Getting Started

1. *What services are available in the community?* Think beyond early intervention programs--who serves children in your community? Who serves families? Who serves children with special needs and their families?

2. *Who should be involved in developing interagency agreements?* Is there a Local Interagency Coordinating Council or an existing group already involved in collaboration? Who are the movers and shakers?

3. *What should be the purpose of the first meeting?* Who should facilitate the meeting?

   NOTE: This group will have many tasks to consider and decisions to make. At the first meeting, participants should identify their priorities or needs. For example, participants could list the most important needs and/or issues related to the coordination and delivery of services for young children with special needs and their families. Then the facilitator could tabulate the responses on a large sheet of paper, so that priorities can be ranked by order of importance.

   Common areas of concern:

   1. Case finding, screening and assessment
   2. Local resource directory for families and professionals
   3. Public awareness and central referral
   4. Transition

B. *Questions for Transition Agreements*

1. *Who will be members of the transition team?* (might be same group as above, might be a subgroup or a different group; need to include persons with the responsibility and authority to make decisions and carry them out at an administrative level)

2. *What is the purpose of the transition agreement?* Is it to define the transition process from hospital to home? hospital to early intervention program? birth-to-three program to early childhood special education program? birth-to-three program to community program (e.g., child care. Head Start, preschool)?

3. *What activities need to occur for smooth transitions? When will they need to happen?* (see sample Timelines)

4. *Who will be responsible?* Who are the individuals within each program who will coordinate and supervise transition activities and be responsible for seeing that each transition step is completed?

5. *What roles are available for families in transition?*

6. *What are the financial and time responsibilities of each program for facilitating transitions?*

7. *What are the assessments needed for eligibility and placement decisions and who will be responsible for them?*

8. *What will be the procedure for transferring records between programs?*

9. *What will be the process for exchange visits between program personnel? for family visits?*

- Adapted from Hazel, R., Barber, Roberts, Behr, Helmstetter, & Guess. (1988). A community approach to an integrated service system for children with special needs. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

INTERAGENCY COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT AMONG:

Lower Yukon School District (LYSD)
Bethel Area Infant Learning Program (ILP)
Association of Village Council Presidents Head Start (AVCP)
RurAL CAP Yukon-Kuskokwim Parent/Child Program (YK/PCP)
RurAL CAP Head Start Program (RurAL CAP, Inc.)

PURPOSE

The intent of this agreement is to provide comprehensive, coordinated services to meet the special educational needs of children from birth to age six. Through inter-agency planning we hope to eliminate duplication of services, promote the most efficient use of resources, and clarify agency roles and responsibilities, thereby assuring continuous, well coordinated services for young children and their families.

SCREENING

Head Start Will:

*Conduct developmental screening on all Head Start eligible children who will be three years old by August 15th. Screenings will be done in the Spring, prior to the program year, using the Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning - Revised (DIAL-R) tool.

Infant Learning Will:

*Screen all enrolled children prior to their 3rd birthday, and provide copies of these screenings to the school district.

LYSD Will:

*Utilize the DIAL-R screening tool when conducting pre-school screenings.

Together We Will:

*Collaborate to determine screening tools, train staff in administering the screening tool, decide upon mutually agreeable dates for screenings, conduct the screening (whenever possible), and share screening results (w/parental permission).

REFERRAL

Head Start Will:

*Use LYSD referral forms when referring children for further evaluation.

*Provide parents with a Prior Notice of Referral Form and a Parental Rights Information Form for each child being referred.

Infant Learning Will:

*Use LYSD referral forms when referring children to the school district.

*Provide parents with a Prior Notice of Referral Form and Parental Rights Information Form for each child being referred.

*Refer enrolled children to the school district three months prior to their 3rd birthday.

LYSD Will:

*Examine all referrals by Head Start or ILP.

Together We Will:

*Coordinate efforts to obtain necessary paperwork (ie consent to release information, parental permission to test, etc.).

ASSESSMENT

LYSD Will:

*Assess children aged 3 years or older who are referred by Head Start or ILP with the approval of the Director of Special Education.

*Accept current ILP evaluations as basis for certification and services, as appropriate.

Together We Will:

*Cooperate to assure that children and families attend all scheduled appointments.

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAM MEETING/CHILD STUDY TEAM MEETING

LYSD Will:

*Coordinate and schedule MDT/CST meetings. They will invite ILP staff, Head Start teacher or home visitor, and/or Head Start Special Needs Coordinator, as appropriate.

Head Start and ILP Will:

*Assure attendance and participation in MDT/CST meetings including formulating the IEP.

*Encourage parental participation in CST meetings and writing the IEP.

SERVICES/CONSULTATION

LYSD WILL:

*Provide Special Education services to all certified pre-school children in the Head Start classroom, whenever possible.

*Provide Special Needs Aides to work with severely impaired children, as determined by the CST.

*Support parents in understanding their child's IEP, and in identifying home activities to help meet the goals and objectives.

ILP Will:

*Provide follow-up consultation on specific children's conditions, needs and family concerns as necessary.

Together We Will:

*Assure for on-going communications re: children's progress, teaching methods and goals being worked on.

*Schedule and attend regular case coordination meetings (local Head Start and Special Education staff).

*Share specific training events as appropriate.

TRANSITIONS

ILP and Parent Child Programs Will:

*Notify LYSD by March 31st re: children who will be three years old by August 15th who may be eligible for Special Education service.

*Attend initial MDT/CST meetings on referred children.

*Follow basic Transition Timeline:

24-30 months	-	Plan with family for transition
30 months	-	Notify local school and set initial MDT/CST meeting
30-36 months	-	Attend MDT/CST meetings as necessary to plan for services.
33 months	-	Formal referral to LYSD
36 months	-	MDT/CST meetings to develop IEP.

*Continue to provide services or consultation;
ILP - consultation for six months following 3rd birthday
PCP - will serve children who turn 3 years old after 8/15, for the program year.

*Invite local Head Start personnel to participate in appropriate above activities.

LYSD Will:

*Notify and invite ILP, PCP or Head Start staff to initial MDT/CST meetings

Head Start Will:

*Participate in above activities, as appropriate.

*Attend Spring CST meetings on children transitioning to Kindergarten.

GENERAL AGREEMENTS:

*There will be on-going communication between LKSD Director of Special Education, Special Needs Coordinators from AVPC, YK/PCP, RurAL CAP and Infant Learning staff as needed.

*All agencies agree to abide by State and Federal laws and procedures to insure confidentiality of information.

*This agreement is in effect from July 1, 1990 to June 30, 1993, and is subject to yearly review by all parties.

Director of Special Education LKSD — 9/24/90 Date

Director AVCP Head Start — 17 October 90 Date

Director Infant Learning Program — 10/5/90 Date

Director RurAL CAP Head Start — 10/26/90 Date

Supervisor, YK/PCP — 9/28/90 Date

TRANSITION PLANNING

Transition Issue	Identified Goal Relative to This Issue	Persons Involved	Activities

TRANSITION PRACTICES

Program_____Date_____

	SENDERS		RECEIVERS	
Transition Activity	Who?	When?	Who?	When?
Share information with family				
Parent permission: Release of information Evaluation				
Transition goals for IFSP/IEP Implement strategies to prepare child and environments				
Notification to potential programs				
Screening and evaluation process				
Transition conference: parents, sending and receiving programs				
Visits between programs				
Plan to obtain resources in receiving program				
Records transfer				
Transition report				
Evaluation of transition				

WHY INVOLVE FAMILIES?

1. Families are the primary protectors, teachers, caregivers for their children, the constant in a child's life.
2. Families are the primary decision makers for their children.
3. Families can provide valuable information.
4. Families can be valuable resources.
5. Families can learn transition skills early in the child's life and use them for years to come.

FAMILY PARTICIPATION BENEFITS TRANSITION

Family participation on transition teams benefits the transition process. Families can

a) foster child adjustment to a new program

b) facilitate maintenance and generalization of learned skills across programs.

c) provide important information about child and family needs

d) be responsible for such tasks as visiting potential receiving programs and conducting home-based skill training

e) be supportive of other team members' efforts

f) serve as "ambassadors" of both sending and receiving programs

FACTORS THAT AFFECT FAMILY PARTICIPATION INCLUDE:

1. Work schedules and other time constraints
2. Economics ($$$ to hire a babysitter or miss work)
3. Family makeup (# of children, involvement of grandparents) Ethnic/cultural/religious background (discipline practices, goals for their children)
4. Emotional needs
5. Time constraints
6. Desire to be invloved
7. Social support

- See also Chandler, L.K., Fowler, & Lubeck. (1987). Assessing family needs: The first step in providing family-focused intervention. Diagnostique, 11, 233-245.

QUESTIONS PARENTS MENTIONED MOST OFTEN AS CONCERNS BEFORE THEIR CHILD'S TRANSITION

1. When should transition planning begin?
2. How should transition planning proceed?
3. Who is responsible for interaction between the sending program and the new program regarding the child's transition?
4. How can parents prepare themselves, their families, and their child for the transition?
5. What characteristics should parents look for in a new program that will meet their child's (and family's) special needs?

TRANSITION PLANNING WITH FAMILIES

1. Respect family needs and preferences.
2. Include "conversations" with families about transition during other professional-parent interactions.
3. Acknowledge that transitions can be stressful.
4. Encourage family participation at the beginning, middle, and end of the process.
5. Begin planning a year before the transition.
6. Share information about the transition process, possible receiving programs, and opportunities to visit them.
7. Help families set transition-related goals.
8. Arrange for families to talk with other families.
9. Have one person that families can contact when questions arise.
10. Answer questions as they occur.
11. Evaluate transition services from the family's view.

- See also Chandler, L.K., Fowler, & Lubeck. (1987). Assessing family needs: The first step in providing family-focused intervention. Diagnostique, 11, 233-245, and Johnson, T.E., Chandler, Kerns, & Fowler. (1986). What are parents saying about family involvement in school transitions? A retrospective interview . . . Journal of the Division for Early Childhood, 11, 10-17, and Shelton, T.L., Jeppson, & Johnson. (1989). Family-centered care for children with special health care needs. Bethesda, MD: Association for the Care of Children's Health.

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CONVERSATIONS WITH FAMILIES ABOUT TRANSITION

Conversation 1: The Initial Transition Planning Meeting. Six to nine months before the child leaves the program, the family and the case manager/sending teacher should:

- Discuss the transition process and review the steps so that the family's interest and desired level of involvement can be reflected in their individual transition timeline.
- Determine who will be involved with the child's transition (including the sending program and if possible the receiving program). NOTE: Families should be free to invite a friend or advocate to join them at future meetings (e.g., teacher, therapist, caregiver, friend). If additional program staff are to be included, parents should know ahead of time who they are and why their presence will be useful.
- Discuss the family's need for information about transition, the family's role in transition planning, and the family's and staff's roles in preparing the child for transition.
- In writing or reviewing the IFSP/IEP, incorporate relevant family and child outcomes related to transition.
- Review the parental consent form for permission to exchange information with the receiving program or school district, if appropriate.
- Discuss parental rights in transition.

Conversation 2: Planning for the Transition Meeting or Multidisciplinary Team Conference. About three months before the child leaves the program, the family and the case manager/sending teacher should:

- Review the timeline.
- Discuss the child's progress and eligibility considerations.
- Discuss the differences in educational plans at the next level and show the receiving program's IFSP/IEP form, if different from existing forms.

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* Discuss possible program options.

* Review the local community's program directory which lists all services for young children (if available).

* Discuss potential classroom sites for the family to visit (if families want this information).

* Identify activities family may choose to do to help prepare the child for the transition.

* Identify, if possible, the members of the transition team (including representatives from the sending and receiving programs, other family members, community members--such as daycare personnel--and special services staff) who will be present at the upcoming eligibility and placement meeting.

Conversation 3: Sharing Information with the New Program. Before the child enters the new program or soon after, the receiving teacher and the family discuss the following areas. In some cases this information may be collected by the sending teacher and sent on to the receiving teacher.

A. Child Information

1. What are some of the activities your child enjoys doing most at home?

2. What are some things that are most difficult for your child to learn?

3. What activities would you like to see continued in the new program?

4. Describe the types of rewards that work best with your child.

5. What types of discipline work best with your child?

6. Other things that you would like the new teacher to know about your child are ....

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B. Family Involvement Information

There are many ways families choose to be involved in programs. Please indicate the ways your family would like to be involved. My family would like to:

_____ Observe my child in the new program.

_____ Volunteer in the new program.

_____ Work with my child at home.

_____ Participate in parent-teacher meetings.

_____ Help select learning goals for my child.

_____ Participate in parent organizations such as PTA/PTO.

_____ Know about my child's successes and problems in the classroom.

_____ Other

C. Communication with the New Program

Teachers and families are busy and may find it difficult to make time to communicate with each other. Yet both want to share information. What would be your preferred way of communicating with the new teacher?

	How Often?	Best Times?
1. Notes:	_____	_____
2. Informal meetings:	_____	_____
3. Parent-teacher meetings:	_____	_____
4. Telephone calls:	_____	_____

-See also Fowler, S.A., Chandler, Johnson,& Stella. (1988). Individualizing family involvement in school transitions, Journal of the Division for Early Childhood, 12, 208-216, and Haine, A.H., Rosenkoetter, & Fowler. (1991). Transition planning for families in early intervention programs. Infants and Young Children, 3(4), 38-47.

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BRIDGING EARLY SERVICES CHECKLIST FOR PARENT VISITS TO CLASSROOMS

Consider the following tips for visiting a classroom

1. Make an appointment with the principal or teacher that you wish to visit; don't drop in unannounced.

2. Ask the teacher what visitors are supposed to do in the classroom - where you should sit, who you may talk to, how you should react to the children in the class, how long you can stay, etc.

3. When you arrive at the school stop by the office to check in and get directions.

4. Show the program information worksheet to the teacher and tell him or her you will use it so that you can remember what you saw during your visit.

5. Write down questions to ask the teacher or principal. Note some of the differences between preschool and elementary school such as teacher/child ratio or classroom rules.

6. Schedule a time to talk with the teacher or principal after the observation or at a later date. If you have questions or concerns it's important to talk about them. Teachers may have questions for you as well.

7. Remember, if you are observing late in the school year, the children in the class have learned a lot already. Many of the skills you see during your visit will probably not be expected of children when they start school in the fall. You might want to ask the teacher what skills children will need to know when school starts.

Program_____Lead Professional_____

Session_____Date_____Special Circumstances_____

SCHEDULE

DURATION

Length of session?

Number of days per week?

Additional opportunities for home visits/parent conferences?

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MEMBERSHIP

Number of children in class?

Number of children with disabilities in class?

Most common socio-economic status of students?

Average number of adults present?

Average number of adults typically interacting with children?

Teacher-child ratio?

SERVICES AVAILABLE

Speech therapy?

Occupational therapy?

Physical therapy?

Music therapy?

Art therapy?

Adaptive physical education?

Vision therapy?

Hearing therapy?

Bus transportation to and from school?

Before school or after school child care?

Library on premises?

Lunch program?

in the familiar classroom or in special lunchroom?

with classmates or with children from other classes?

Other special services?

PHYSICAL FEATURES

Is the classroom free of hazards?

Is the lighting unusual in any way?

Is there ample room for the number of people present?

How are facilities accessible for person with physical disabilities?

Do learning materials and equipment appear to be adequate?

Are classroom areas clearly separated by purpose?

Is there a "private place" in the classroom where children may go if they feel over-stimulated?

ELIGIBILITY

Are there minimum competency levels (written or unwritten) for children entering this program?

Are there minimum competency levels (written or unwritten) for children to graduate from this program?

Are children taught at their developmental levels, or are all expected to accomplish the same tasks?

SEATING ROUTINES

Do children ever play or work while sitting on the floor?

as a cluster for group discussions?

on individual spaces (carpet squares, taped spots)?

in chairs?

Do children ever sit at desks?

Do children ever sit at small tables?

Do children at any time during the day sit in assigned places?

INSTRUCTION AND FEEDBACK ROUTINES

Are activities more cooperative or individualistic?

Is group problem-solving in evidence?

When and how are children given feedback on their accomplishments?

Is there more encouraging of appropriate behavior or more correcting of inappropriate behavior?

Is there an individualized approach to pre-academic tasks?

Are there individual contracts or individual programs to increase positive social interactions?

Is there a posted schedule which tends to be followed daily?

Is there a defined system for behavior and guidance? What is it?

Does the teacher describe and demonstrate how to do a task as well as assigning the task?

INDEPENDENT PLAY AND WORK ROUTINES

Are children allowed/expected to play or work without an adult continually nearby?

Are children expected to plan work or play in advance?

cooperative planning?

independent planning?

Are children ever expected to follow sequenced directions given in advance of the task?

What instructional terms (write your name, circle, draw a line under, skip a space) are children expected to understand in order to work independently?

In what kind of seating arrangement are children expected to work independently?

What are children expected to do when the assigned activity is finished?

CLASSROOM INTERACTION

For how much of the total time do children play or work cooperatively? Are social interactions mostly positive?

Does the teacher appear relaxed and confident when interacting with the children?

Does the teacher find time for frequent personal comments to individual children during the session?

How long are children expected to listen and converse in a large group setting?

Are there frequent opportunities for children to interact with one another?

Do children generally appear to be actively involved in learning?

FREE PLAY ROUTINES

Is there a scheduled choice time? How long?

Are activity choices open? Or are activity choices restricted to a certain area(s) or type(s) of equipment chosen by the teacher?

Are teachers available for assistance and encouragement during choice activities?

ATTENTION AND ASSISTANCE-SEEKING ROUTINES

In group discussions, are children allowed to speak out answers without being called upon?

Do children ever raise their hands to answer in a group situation?

Are there other acceptable ways to seek the teacher's attention?

Is it acceptable to ask peers for help with written tasks?

Is there evidence of planned cooperative learning?

How do children address adults (first name, Mr./Ms.____, title)?

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT ROUTINES

Do children manage a schoolbox or other personal supplies?

Do children get out or return classroom materials independently?

Do children have cleanup responsibilities? Which?

What kinds of self care tasks are children expected to perform independently?

What are the children expected to manage independently during eating times?

What are children expected to manage independently during toileting times?

MOVEMENT ROUTINES

Do children ever move in lines?

Do children ever move while holding hands with a partner?

Are transitions mostly structured or unstructured?

Are any transitions cued by a direction from the teacher to the whole class?

How many different instructions are given at one time during group directions?

What types of external cues are given for transitions (lights off/on, piano chord, bell)?

Are there any complex cues for transition (symbols printed on cards or necklaces, movement to or from a designated color or shape)?

RESTROOM ROUTINES

Is the restroom within or outside the classroom?

Do children go in a group or singly to the restroom?

Do children ask permission in any manner before using the restroom?

Are there any unique restroom routines?

Do boys and girls use the same or different facilities?

What visual symbol identifies the restroom?

OTHER PARTICULAR ROUTINES WHICH MIGHT BE TAUGHT TO HELP CHILDREN BRIDGE BETWEEN PROGRAMS:

GETTING READY FOR THE NEW PROGRAM: TIPS FOR PARENTS

1. Help your child be excited about going to the new school. Talk often about how much fun it will be to go to the "big school", about activities your child will do there. This will help your child want to make the transition.

2. Tell your child often how proud you are that he/she is growing up, how pleased you are that the child is doing so many things by himself/herself, and how well you know the child will do in the new school. This will help your child feel confident about handling the new experiences ahead.

3. Place your child in situations where he/she needs to follow directions--one-step at first, then two, then three. Teach your child to rehearse directions in order to remember them.

4. Help your child learn self care skills, which are age appropriate, such as putting away toys, handwashing, independent toileting, buttoning, zipping, and shoe tying. Teach your child to recognize his/her own name and the basic colors. Busy teachers value these skills.

5. Put your child in some situations where he cannot do the expected task and must ask for help. If he/she doesn't know how to ask for help, demonstrate polite asking and then wait for the child to imitate you before assisting.

6. Read books with your child every day. Talk together about the pictures and the story. If your child doesn't like to sit still for long, read for a brief time each day; even if the book time is only two minutes long, make it a happy time. You will then notice how your child's attention span increases.

7. Watch TV with your child, especially shows like "Reading Rainbow," "Mr. Rogers," and "Sesame Street." Talk together about what you are seeing. If you allow your child to watch cartoons, watch with him/her. Ask your child to tell you what happened in the cartoon story. Help the child to reconstruct the sequence of events.

8. Let your child help you sort the laundry, set the table, cook, bake, put away groceries, and organize his/her books and toys. All of these are classification tasks, related to school skills.

9. Teach the child to do simple tasks at home. Most young children can learn to hang up their coats and put things away. All but the most severely handicapped children can learn to help pick up their toys. Preschoolers can keep a "school box" at home, where the child is expected to put crayons, scissors, pencil, and eraser. Let your child help you vacuum, sweep, dust, and wash sinks and the bathtub. These very practical jobs also develop physical coordination.

10. Be sure your child has lots of opportunities to run, jump, climb, and play outside. These activities can be done in a city neighborhood, in a rural area, or at a park; they cannot usually be done inside a house! Children who have learned to control their own bodies in space are usually more confident in new situations and more capable of managing complex motor tasks, like walking in a line.

11. Any time you teach your child to do a new task, break it into little parts and teach each part (for example, putting on shoes, cleaning the bedroom, opening a milk carton). Reward with praise each part of the task the child does successfully. Very few people praise a child too much; most of us praise too little.

12. When you go places with your child, talk about what you are seeing. Point out characteristics (color, size, shape) and names of objects you view. Try to be conversational, as you would with an adult, rather than constantly quizzing your child ("oh, look at the red house," rather than "what color is this house?"; "I like the BIG pumpkin best--which one do you like?" rather than "show me the big one").

13. When you get home from a trip to the store or church or a party, ask your child to tell another family member what you did. If the child has difficulty retelling the event, help and support so that the story can be told. This skill is called recasting. It is closely related to reading comprehension.

14. Point out letters and words and numbers in the world around your child (McDonald's, the house numbers, names of family members on letters, the numbers of hymns in the songbook at church). This will provide a foundation for learning symbols in reading.

15. Frequently count objects, touching them as you say the numbers. This will help your child realize that numbers represent sets of things.

16. Talk often about interesting jobs your child might have when he/she grows up--not just about making lots of money at a job. Be sure your child knows that most jobs require working hard and doing well in school.

17. Teach your child to appreciate that every person is unique and special; that human differences are a wonderful part of our world and not a threat; and that all people need to help others as well as be helped BY others in order to live happily.

18. Enjoy time you spend with your child. Positive and trusting attitudes about people and the world which your child learns now will remain with him/her throughout life.

How Can We Prepare the Child for Transition?

ASSESS:

- Potential receiving programs - interviews, visits
- The present program
- The child
- The whole class/caseload
- Parent wishes
- Community resources

PLAN:

- Partnership with parents, as they wish to be involved
- Transition outcomes for the IFSP, or transition goals and objectives for the IEP
- Curriculum strategies for the whole class/caseload
- Instruction and experiences to accomplish those objectives
- Use of family and community resources
- Evaluation of the child preparation activities

IMPLEMENT:

- Transition activities with the whole class/caseload
- Work on particular skills needed by the individual child
- Activities parents have requested to support transition skills development at home
- Assistance to adults in other community programs who are helping in the child's transition plan

EVALUATE:

- The child's progress toward goals
- The impact of transition planning on the class/caseload
- Parent satisfaction with the process
- Sending and receiving teachers' satisfaction
- Child satisfaction

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- From Rosenkoetter, S.E., Haine, & Fowler. (In production). Bridging Early Services: Transition planning for young children with special needs.

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TRANSITION COORDINATORS

CAN BE:

an administrator, a teacher, a special educator, a social worker, a nurse, another person - such as a parent volunteer

IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:

* Implementing the Transition Plan
* Organizing and monitoring transitions
* Acting as a liaison between programs and the family
* Serving as an information resource and contact person

MUST BE:

* Familiar with transition procedures and interagency agreement
* Familiar with other sending and receiving programs
* Familiar with service and placement options
* Familiar with community resources
* Provided time to organize and monitor transition activities
* Given responsibility to make transition-related decisions

POTENTIAL TRANSITION TEAM MEMBERS

FAMILY

- Parents or Guardians
- Brothers and Sisters
- Grandparents
- Uncles and Aunts
- Other Extended Family
- Friends
- Neighbors
- Babysitters

COMMUNITY

- Medical Personnel
- County Health Nurse
- Volunteers
- Child and Family Advocate
- Private Services Agencies
- Mental Health Organizations
- Religious Organizations
- Special Equipment Vendors

PROGRAM STAFF

- Administrators
- Transition Coordinators
- Teachers
- Teaching Staff
- Special Services Staff
  - Physical Therapist
  - Occupational Therapist
  - Speech Therapist
  - Psychologist
  - Audiologist
  - Nurse
- Social Worker
- Case Manager

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SUPPORTING THE CHILD'S TRANSITION WITHIN THE SENDING PROGRAM

This list contains some ideas that sending program staff may incorporate into their transition curriculum. Some of the suggestions may be used regardless of the type of program a child will enter. Others require knowledge about the receiving program.

A. During the year before a child will leave your program

- Plan with parents and receiving program to provide some common routines and objectives for skill development.
- Talk with the family about transition and the differences between the sending and receiving programs.
- Gradually give children more responsibility for their personal and classroom/family possessions.
- Teach children to ask for assistance in nondisruptive ways (e.g., to ask politely, to stand by you and seek eye contact, to raise hands).
- Teach children to follow directions given individually, to small groups, and to the whole class.
- Gradually reduce the number of prompts given to children for tasks.
- Gradually increase the amount of time children work and/or play independently and with peers.
- Include play activities that encourage peer interaction and cooperation.
- Encourage children to complete one task before starting another.
- Provide a variety of cues to signal changes in classroom activities such as flicking the lights off and on, verbal instructions, timers, identify groups of students wearing certain colors, or types of clothing, etc.
- Teach children to recognize their written name and to claim ownership of materials and possessions.
- Teach children to follow routines at the end of activities and during home or classroom transitions such as putting away materials.
- Teach safety rules for crossing the street, riding a bus, etc.
- Take a field trip on a bus.
- Talk about meeting new children and ways to make new friends. Provide opportunities for children to meet other children.
- Provide opportunities for field trips to other classrooms or schools.

B. During the 6 months before a child will be leaving your program

- Read stories about a variety of different transition experiences to children.
- Gradually decrease and delay attention and praise provided to individual children during work and play activities.
- Teach children to line up and move in lines, if that will be important in the new program.
- Give children exposure to unfamiliar settings and unfamiliar people.
- Vary the duration of activities.
- Vary the amount of help provided during tasks.
- Vary the type and number of instructions provided.
- Teach children to toilet independently, if appropriate.

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C. During the last 2 weeks before a child will be leaving your program

- Talk to the child about transition and the differences between the sending and receiving programs.
- Listen to child's fears or concerns about the coming change.
- Look at pictures of the new school building, classroom, and teacher.
- Write child's dictated story about going to his new school.
- Provide materials used in the new program in the dramatic play area
- Teach children the difference between boy and girl restrooms, if that will be important in the new program.
- Arrange for the children to spend an hour in the new program while it is in session before they make the transition.
- Teach children some of the routines that are used in the new program.
- Talk to children about and use some of the rules that are used in the new program.

D. After the child leaves your program:

- Contact parents to evaluate their satisfaction with the transition.
- Keep in touch with new program to assist if questions arise.
- Evaluate the transition, identify any improvements needed.

List some of your own ideas:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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- Adapted from work by Lynette K. Chandler.

SUPPORTING THE CHILD'S TRANSITION WITHIN THE RECEIVING PROGRAM

This list contains some ideas that receiving program staff may incorporate into their transition curriculum. Some of the suggestions may be used regardless of the types of program a child attended previously. Others require knowledge about the sending program.

Before the beginning of school

- Plan with sending program and parents to provide some familiar routines and objects.
- Invite parents to a program orientation meeting. Describe your classroom, typical goals, and provide the opportunity for parents to ask questions.
- Provide parents with a schedule of appropriate times to call or visit the program. Develop a communication schedule with families.
- Invite parents to bring their children to a "Get Acquainted Open House". Provide a tour of the school, classroom, restroom, playground, and make sure parents can meet all the staff who will be working with their children.

During the first week or two

- Talk about the new program with the children. Talk about how they are growing up and that you know the new program is different and maybe a little scary, but that it can be fun too.
- Initially provide a lot of time for play activities that encourage peer interaction and cooperation.
- Provide simple, 1-2 step instructions and gradually teach more complicated and lengthy directions.
- Demonstrate the meaning of instruction words.
- Review the procedures for and the location of the restrooms with children daily during the first few weeks of class.
- Review classroom rules, routines, and other procedures with children daily during the first few weeks of class; fade these instructions gradually.
- Identify the skill level of transitioning children. Adapt the curriculum to begin at their level and build from it. Provide lots of success.
- Use behavior management procedures that were employed in a child's sending program. These may be faded during the year as skills advance.
- Find out if particular children have favorite toys, rewards, etc. Use these during the first few weeks and fade them to regular classroom toys and reward systems.
- Find out if children know each other at the beginning of the year. Assign children to "buddies" that they know, or assign children already in the program to be buddies for new children.
- Use familiar curricular materials from the sending program as supplements to existing curriculum (e.g., songs, books, games, etc.).

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During the first few months

- Use material rewards if needed, but fade them to social rewards as soon as possible.
- Vary the duration and type of activities.
- Vary the amount of help provided during academic tasks. Vary the type and number of instructions provided.
- Use games that promote cooperation and collaboration or that allow group responses; minimize competition.
- Provide a parent-staff get together so parents have a comfortable opportunity to ask questions about their child's program and progress and meet staff and other parents.
- Contact sending staff to report progress and evaluate transition success.

List some of your own ideas:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

- Adapted from work by Lynette K. Chandler

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SKILLS WHICH EASE PRESCHOOL ENTRY

SOCIAL BEHAVIORS

1. Separates from parents for short periods of time.
2. Communicates with adults who are not family members.
3. Responds positively to social recognition from non-family members.
4. Expresses emotions appropriately for developmental level.
5. Tries new activities.
6. Imitates other children's actions.
7. Initiates contact with adults and children.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

1. Uses a signal to gain attention or to obtain objects.
2. Communicates own wants and needs, such as eating, drinking or toileting.
3. Makes eye contact with speakers.
4. Attends to speakers for at least brief periods.
5. Responds to adults when called by name.
6. Seeks help from adults.
7. Follows some one-step directions.
8. Initiates interaction with other children and adults.
9. Responds to questions.

SELF-CARE SKILLS

1. Feeds self.
2. Responds to warning words.
3. Puts on or removes simple garments.
4. Recognizes own belongings.

COGNITIVE SKILLS

1. Recognizes relatives and other significant people.
2. Explores objects and places.
3. Demonstrates awareness of cause and effect.
4. Combines pieces of toys or sets of materials.
5. Avoids obvious dangers.

-See also Rosenkoetter, S.E. (1990). First day of kindergarten: What teachers expect from children. Toronto: CEC, and Heins, A.H., Fowler, Schwartz, Kottwitz, & Rosenkoetter. (1989). A comparison of preschool and kindergarten teacher expectations for school readiness. Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 4(1), 75-88.

NON ACADEMIC SKILLS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN

PLAYING/WORKING INDEPENDENTLY AND COLLABORATIVELY

1. Plays/works appropriately with and without peers.
2. Completes tasks approximately on time.
3. Stays with an activity for an appropriate amount of time.
4. Plays/works with few individual prompts from teacher.

INTERACTING WITH PEERS

1. Imitates peer actions when learning new routines.
2. Initiates and maintains contact with peers.
3. Responds to peers' initiations.
4. Learns and uses names of peers.
5. Shares objects and turns with peers.
6. Plans with peers.

FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS

1. Responds to adult questions.
2. Responds appropriately to multi-step verbal directions.
3. Responds appropriately to verbal directions which include common school-related prepositions, nouns, and verbs.
4. Complies with group instructions as well as individual ones.
5. Modifies behavior when given verbal feedback.
6. Recalls and follows directions for tasks discussed/demonstrated previously.
7. Watches others or seeks help if doesn't understand directions.

RESPONDING TO ROUTINES

1. Learns new routines after limited practice opportunities.
2. Moves quickly and quietly from one activity to another without individual reminders.
3. Reacts appropriately to changes in routine.
4. Cares for personal belongings.

CONDUCTING SELF ACCORDING TO CLASSROOM RULES

1. Waits appropriately.
2. Lines up if teacher requests to do so.
3. Sits appropriately.
4. Focuses attention on the speaker, shifts attention appropriately, and participates in class activities in a manner relevant to the task or topic.
5. Seeks teacher attention or assistance in acceptable ways.
6. Separates from parents and accepts the authority of school personnel.
7. Expresses emotions or feelings appropriately.

- See also Rosenkoetter, S.E. (1990). First day of kindergarten: What teachers expect from children. Toronto: CEC, and Hains, A.H., Fowler, Schwartz, Kottwitz, & Rosenkoetter. (1989). A comparison of preschool and kindergarten teacher expectations for school readiness. Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 4(1), 75-88.

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INDIVIDUAL TRANSITION PLAN

CHILD'S NAME:_____ DATE:_____
CHILD'S AGE:_____ CURRENT PLACEMENT:_____
PARENT'S NAME:_____ RELATED SERVICES:_____
PROPOSED PLACEMENT:_____

CHILD'S OBJECTIVE RELATED TO TRANSITION	PARENT ACTION	CURRENT STAFF ACTION	RECEIVING STAFF ACTION	TIMELINE

From Idaho Early Childhood Procedures Manual

ACTIVITY	DATE INITIATED	DATE COMPLETED
1. Meet with family - Release information Parent role in Transition		
2. Contact receiving Agency		
3. Pre staff options		
4. Sending staff observes placement options, assess environments		
5. Receiving staff observes child in current placement		
6. Schedule family to visit placement options		
7. Write transition plan for child for proposed placement		
8. Adapt curriculum and environment, implement plan		
9. Schedule CST, write IEP, transfer records		
10. Evaluation follow-up to transition		

From Idaho Early Childhood Procedures Manual

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ELEMENTS OF A GOOD REPORT

CHILD AND FAMILY DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Child's name, address, birth date, chronological age, present placement, present disability/area of exceptionality if identified in current program, parents' names and address.

INITIAL REFERRAL INFORMATION

MEDICAL INFORMATION OF CONCERNS WHICH NEED TO BE MANAGED IN NEXT ENVIRONMENT

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT PROGRAM. LIST OF SPECIAL SERVICES RECEIVED, NAMES OF PROGRAM STAFF WHO HAVE WORKED WITH THE CHILD

Names of resource persons who have been especially helpful to family and school in planning for the child.

DEVELOPMENTAL SKILLS: GENERAL SUMMARY

- Current skills (prescademic/ academic, motor, language, self help) and conditions under which they can be demonstrated
- Curriculum materials used
- Degree of teacher guidance required
- Amount of reinforcement needed and specific type(s) of reinforcement which is most effective
- Some recent tasks performed well (to be introduced on the first day of the new program to promote security) and suggestions of next tasks in the sequence.
- Lists of preferred and disliked topics and activities (academic and play) -- preferred activities may be used as rewards after difficult tasks in the new classroom.

SOCIAL SKILLS SUMMARY

Current social skills
Degree of ability to initiate to peers (familiar and unfamiliar)
Degree of ability to maintain interactions
Problem behaviors and effective management strategies for them
Social situations which are especially difficult

SUMMARY OF IEP/IFSP GOALS AND TASKS COMPLETED Include relevant dates.

LIST OF CURRENT CLASSROOM GOALS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE GOALS

SUMMARY OR COPY OF IEP/IFSP IF AVAILABLE

PARENT CONCERNS AND SUGGESTIONS

GENERAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DATE REPORT PREPARED, NAME, POSITION, ADDRESS, AND PHONE NUMBER OF PERSON WHO PREPARED THE REPORT AND/OR TO CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION

BOOKS TO PREPARE CHILDREN FOR TRANSITION

This list is reprinted by permission from Transition, published by the Head Start Bureau, U.S. Administration for Children, Youth, and Families, Washington, D.C.

Author	Title
Alexander	Sabrina
Allard	Miss Nelson is Missing!
Anderson	Carlos Goes to School
Arnold	Where Do You Go to School?
Barkin	I'D Rather Stay Home
Barkin	Sometimes I Hate School
Behrens	What I Hear in My School
Berenstain	The Berenstain Bears Go to School
Boyd	I Met a Polar Bear
Bram	I Don't Want To Go to School
Breinburg	Shawn Goes to School
Buchmeier	I Know a Teacher
Burningham	The School
Calmenson	The Kindergarten Book
Cassidy	We Like Kindergarten
Caudill	A Pocketful of Cricket
Charles	Calico Cat at School
Cohen	The New Teacher
Cohen	No Good in Art
Cohen	When Will I Read
Cohen	See You Tomorrow, Charles
Cohen	Will I Have a Friend?
Cohen	First Grade Takes a Test
Cole	What's Good for a Five-Year-Old?
Dalton	The New Girl at School
Elliott	Grover Goes to School
Frandsen	I started School Today
Gordon	Crystal is the New Girl
Haas	A Special Place for Johnny
Hamilton-Meritt	My First Days of School
Harris	The School Mouse
Hillert	Who Goes to School?
Hoffman	Steffie and Me
Holland	First Day of School
Horvath	Will the Real Tommy Wilson Please Stand Up
Hurd	Come with Me to Nursery School
Isadora	Willaby
Jones	Going to Kindergarten
Lenski	Debbie Goes to Nursery School
Lexau	I Hate Red Rover
Lystad	Jennifer Takes Over P.S. 94

Title	Author
Mann	The 25 Cent Friend
Marino	Where Are the Mothers?
Marshall	Fox at School
Marshall	Miss Nelson is Back
Mason	I Go to School
Matthias	Out the Door
McInnes	Goodnight Painted Pony
Meshover	The Monkey that Went to School
Nichols	Big Paul's School Bus
Oppenheim	Mrs. Peloski's Snake
Ormsby	Twenty One Children
Oxenbury	First Day of School
Parish	Jumper Goes to School
Quackenbush	First Grade Jitters
Relf	The First Day of School
Relf	Show and Tell
Rockwell	My Nursery School
Rogers	Mr. Rogers Talks about...
Schick	The Little School at Cottonwood Corners
Schwartz	Bea and Mr. Jones
Simon	I'm Busy Too
Stein	A Child Goes to School
Steiner	I'd Rather Stay with You
Steptoe	Jeffrey Bear Cleans Up His Act
Thwaite	The Chatterbox
Tobias	The Dawdlewalk
Udry	What Mary Jo Shared
Weiber	Goodbye, Hello
Wells	Timothy Goes to School
Wiseman	Morris Goes to School
Wittman	The Wonderful Mrs. Trumbly
Wolde	Betsy's First Day at Nursery School
Wolf	Adam Smith Goes to School
Wooley	Gus Was a Real Dumb Ghost

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CONSIDER THESE ISSUES FOR EVALUATION

I. ATTAINMENT OF TRANSITION PLAN.

1. How many children/families made the transition?
2. Did personnel and agencies do what the timeline said they would?
3. If not, why not?
4. Should the timeline or responsibilities of personnel be changed for next year? How?
5. Should the interagency agreement be changed in any way before next year? How?
6. Should interagency agreements be drawn for additional or fewer agencies next year? How?

II. SUCCESS OF TRANSITION PLAN.

1. Were children appropriately placed? (see Follow-up Questionnaire)
2. According to parents and professionals, does each child appear to be happy in the new environment?
3. Were parents satisfied with the transition process? (see Post-Transition Family Satisfaction Scale)
4. Was the sending staff satisfied with the transition process?
5. Was the receiving staff satisfied with the transition process?
6. Were program administrators satisfied with the transition process?
7. Where did breakdowns occur in the timeline?
8. How might the process be changed to avoid missteps next year?
9. Do additional agencies or personnel need to be involved next year to overcome this year's problem(s)?
10. What additional information do families and professionals need to improve the transition process? (see Post-Transition Family Information Scale)
11. What suggestions do transition team members have for improving the transition process next year?

III. COSTS OF TRANSITION PLANNING.

1. How much time was spent to implement the transition plan?
   --by families?
   --by professionals?
2. Should changes be made in time demands next year?
3. What were the costs of implementing the transition plan?
4. Should the funds expended next year for transition planning be the same, more, or less?

WHY EVALUATE?

- To determine how well the transition plan worked.
- To keep the transition program, as part of the intervention program, responsive to child, family, professional, and agency needs.
- To ensure that the interagency agreement and transition timeline are being followed.
- To discover where the transition plan needs to be changed for next year.

EVALUATION OF TRANSITION PLAN AND PROCESS

How can you evaluate your transition activities?

- review records, record data
- meet with transition team and discuss process and results
- use questionnaires:
  - to parents (Transition Satisfaction Scale for Parents)
  - to sending teachers
  - to receiving teachers
- meet with parents, sending and receiving teachers, other key people
- share results with sending/receiving programs
- prepare a report, summarizing results of evaluation and recommendations for change

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TRANSITION SATISFACTION SCALE FOR PARENTS

How did your child's transition go?
Check the box which describes your feeling:

1. The amount of time you had/when you began planning your child's transition to the next program?			
2. Your choices for your child's program? Options?			
3. Pretransition visits you or your child made to the new program?			
4. The preparation provided by the sending program to ease your child's transition?			
5. The information and support provided by the receiving program to welcome you and your child.			
6. The adjustment your child has made to the new program?			
7. The adjustment your family has made to the new program?			
8. The way your child's teachers shared information with you about your child?			
9. Discussions you had with other parents about your child's transition?			
10. Decisions you made regarding your child's transition?			
11. Decisions others made regarding your child's transition?			
12. The whole transition process?			
13. The amount of time you spend helping prepare your child at home?			
14. The decisions you made in selecting the new program for your child?			

- Adapted from Johnson, T.E. See also Johnson, T.E., Chandler, L.K., Keins, G.M., & Fowler, S.A. (1986). What are parents saying about family involvement in school transitions? A retrospective transition interview. Journal of the Division for Early Childhood, 11, 10-17.

SOME OTHER GOOD IDEAS ON TRANSITION...

LOWER KUSKOKWIM, AK (BETHEL)--Staff of the school district, the Parent-Child Head Start Program (0-3), the Infant Learning Program (0- 3), and the Head Start preschool program has crafted an agreement about how they will cooperate to serve youngsters in remote villages, where weather may prohibit travel for weeks at a time. While the special educator has expertise in serving children with disabilities, the Native Alaskan Head Start worker in the village knows local customs, culture, and people; she can also visit weekly regardless of the weather. Collaboration makes this plan work for target children, but the benefits, including mutual sharing among professionals, extend to other children and families, as well.

NORTHWEST KANSAS (OAKLEY)--A large educational service center (rural, extremely sparsely populated) serves 21 counties and numerous school districts. It has appointed a Transition Coordinator, who works with all transitions of children 0-5 across the region. Over time, she has learned procedures, deadlines, and key personnel to be contacted for transition-related issues. This information is a wonderful resource, especially for new staff members. Although the Transition Coordinator does not personally manage all transition arrangements, she does sit in on many IFSP/IEP transition conferences and is informed about decisions made in her absence.

RACINE, WI--A school psychologist serves as the contact point for children making transitions from or to all public and private schools in his county.

PENSACOLA, FL--Each preschool and kindergarten teacher has one day each year set aside to visit the sending/receiving program of choice. Staff members are now working on improving their observation skills so they can gain more information to shape transition planning and to share with colleagues.

McPHERSON, KS--To ease the strain for children and families moving from home-based to center-based, the MCKIDS program sets aside the child's final two months before age 3 as "bridge time." During time which would otherwise be allotted for home visits, the home-based teacher visits the preschool with the child and supports him/her in preschool activities. Parents may ride the bus with their child or observe the sessions through a viewing window. This practice helps the child feel comfortable in the new surroundings. It informs the receiving program staff about the child's special needs, and it reassures the parent that the child will be happy in preschool.

TOLEDO, OH; AMARILLO, TX; PHILADELPHIA, PA--Developmentally-trained interventionists based in the level 3 neonatal intensive care unit follow the family back to their home community for visits as long as the family wishes. Their purpose is to continue consultation regarding child or family needs, to assist in locating local resources, and to support the family during this stressful time. Once the infant's health is stabilized and participation in local early intervention is assured, the hospital interventionist phases out.

OMAHA, NE--Project Continuity at Meyer Rehabilitation Institute provides family-centered transition planning for infants and toddlers with major health problems as they go back to their home communities around the U.S. and in foreign countries. Medical, social, and developmental needs are considered in a unified plan.

WICHITA, KS--More than 40 agencies which serve young children with handicaps and risk conditions cooperate in Connecting Point, which matches children with services appropriate to their age, disability, and parent preference. At the kindergarten transition, a school system social worker coordinates assessment, paper transfer, communication, classroom visits, and decision-making conferences for all children from both private and public intervention programs.

VERMONT and KENTUCKY--A central agency has been responsible for promoting transition-planning teams and providing technical assistance to them in all parts of the state.

KANSAS, WISCONSIN, IDAHO, and NORTH DAKOTA--Training has been made available to service providers in all parts of the state in a flexible model which can be adapted to local situations. Local areas have been encouraged to develop their own local transition timeline and plan. Follow-up consultation is available for those who request it.

MISSOURI--The state's Transition Taskforce has brought together four-person teams from each of the 11 regions of the state for training on interagency transition planning. These teams, in turn, have facilitated full-day planning meetings for parents and professionals in their areas.

CALIFORNIA, FLORIDA, and KANSAS--Parent groups offer education support, and ongoing mentoring to families of young children in transition.

MILWAUKEE, WI--Head Start, private agencies, and the schools are working together to develop common forms used in transition.

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